3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

127 these were not kept at the headquarters of the State, but
121 distributed in the police stations and many of them had been eliminated. But the State Superintendent of Police called in as many aboriginal files as could be found, and again after much sifting I found myself with exactly 50 unselected Bison-horn Maria suicide records. These extended over a period of 10 years.

114 Between 1935 and 1942 I made many tours in this enchanting land among these enchanting people. On the earlier tours I was accompanied by my friend Mr Shamrao Hivale whose amazing sympathy and insight helped me to catch my first vision of Maria culture. Later I had the support of my wife who, being herself a Gond, was able to get quickly in touch with the people and immediately established a friendly atmosphere. Particularly in the later tours I tried to see as many scenes of violence as possible, to talk to released convicts and to discover the general attitude of a village towards any crime that had been committed within its boundaries. In Aranpur I stood beside the still warm ashes of the ritually-cremated clothes of Barse Chewa who had recently been hanged in jail. At Khutepal, I watched Oyami Masa's children playing on the very floor once stained by the blood of his murdered wife. In the forest near Jabeli
[211] I had a clearing made so that I could photograph the carved pillar erected in memory of a famous murderer. In Rewali I was visited by a ferocious-looking youth who had twice stood on trial for his life and had twice preserved it. Here too I talked with Hemla Bakka who killed his wife for infidelity and was now unable to get another. In Doriras I saw the
[764] grave of the murdered Boti which had been desecrated by Ghasia for the sake of the purse of money which had been buried to help the dead man on his journey to the other world. In the same village I visited the home of Kawasi Borga then serving a life sentence, and talked to his fine sons and his sad pathetic wife.

124 Later I spent many hours in the Jagdalpur Jail talking to Maria who were serving terms of life-imprisonment for homicide. Some of them were as informative as the limits of their psychology allowed, for it must always be remembered that aboriginals are not accustomed to discussing those matters which are of special interest to anthropologists. Other